


LET'S TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Edition 01 | HEALTH EQUITY BEAT
A HEALTH EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



In 2020, at least 1 in 5 adults experienced a mental illness. Many adults experiencing mental illness report that the pandemic had a significant negative impact on their mental health. Let's work together to improve mental health in our homes and communities.

● WARNING SIGNS

Know when someone is in crisis

If you or someone you know is experiencing these early warning signs, it is time to call for help.

- ☐ Excessive worrying or fear
- ☐ Excessive sadness
- ☐ Confused thinking
- ☐ Problems concentrating
- ☐ Extreme mood swings
- ☐ Prolonged anger or irritation
- ☐ Avoiding friends & social situations
- ☐ Overuse of alcohol or substances
- ☐ Thinking or talking about suicide

In crisis? Call (716) 834-3131 or dial 988

● #MOOD

People often don't get the mental health help they need because they don't know where to start. No matter how hopeless and alone you feel, there is always someone that is ready and willing to help you. Start by telling just one person you feel comfortable with and who you know will be a good listener.

Learn how to ask for help at justtellone.org



Erie County
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MAKE A LIST



DO YOU GET ME?

Respect & dignity are crucial in mental health care

Asking your provider about their understanding of your culture will help them understand what is important in your treatment.

Here are 3 great questions to ask:

- Have you treated people like me or received training in cultural competence for mental health?
- How do you see our cultural backgrounds impacting communication and my treatment?
- What is your understanding of differences in health outcomes for patients like me?



Track your positive mental health habits

Mood



Tracking your mood helps you see when you need support.

Physical activity

How many days each week are you able to get moving for 30 minutes?

Nutrition

What you eat impacts how your body reacts to stress.

Community

What are the ways you stay connected to your community?

Sleep

Track the ways you prioritize sleep each week.

GUT FEELING

Serotonin is a chemical messenger that helps your brain stabilize moods, regulates sleep, and inhibits pain. Serotonin is produced in your gastrointestinal tract. So, caring for your gut is

important to your mental health. If you're feeling low, take a look at your diet & try to consume more of the healthy foods you have access to.



#COUPLEGOALS

Good communication is extra important when mental illness is part of your life together.

Use active listening

- Be open and honest about your feelings.
- Eye contact, gentle touch & showing interest will help your partner feel safe.
- Consider that you may not understand what your partner is feeling.



COOL IT TOOLS

Over 40 million adults in the U.S. are experiencing anxiety disorder.

When you are overwhelmed, call on your 5 senses to practice soothing anxiety. It may seem silly at first, but grounding, or steering your attention away, is an effective tool to combat your body's "fight or flight" response to stress.

MENTAL HEALTH ALLIES



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Dial 988

Crisis Services
24-Hour Hotline

716-834-3131

Crisis Text Hotline
Mon-Fri 6-11PM

716-300-2338

Spectrum CARES for families & children in crisis

716-882-4357

Kids' Helpline

716-834-1144

24-Hour Addiction Hotline

716-831-7007

Erie County Warmline

716-248-2941

Peer Support 4-11PM

text 716-392-2221

211 WNY 24-Hour Health & Human Services Hotline

Dial 211

NY Project Hope
COVID-19 Emotional
Support Hotline

1-844-863-9314
[8am-10pm]



All services are linked above

Breathe. Focus on exhaling two times as long as you inhale to decrease your heart rate.

Look. Notice what is off in the distance and what is close. Name the details you see around you out loud.

Listen. Pay close attention to the noises you hear around you (cars, machines, birds).

Touch. Hold your hands & wrists under cold water. If you're outside, touch the ground.

Smell & Taste. Chew a piece of mint gum or smell something spicy. Concentrate on the tingling of the sensation.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Find togetherness and heal close to home

Communities can be the support system a person needs. Community care means supporting one another and the broader community. It has been around for generations. Community care can come from your neighborhood, your family, your faith-based practice, and beyond. You might receive community care in one of these forms:

- Peer-to-peer support
- Community Health Workers
- Community organized efforts

Community care is linked to community healing. As we work to heal each other, we can learn to heal ourselves.

Community care can mean a lot of different things. Make a meal for a friend in need, help a child with their bike chain, chat with an elder, join in collective prayer, or stand up for someone who needs your support. These are all forms of community care.

Each of us has a collection of practices that form part of our daily lives and connect us to other people. These forms of community care come from our ancestors and heritage. Practicing them contributes to collective healing.

- Prayer circles
- Spiritual healing practices
- Multigenerational living
- Kinship and familial bonds
- Storytelling
- Collective art
- Energy rituals

More information about community care at mhanational.org/bipoc-mental-health



THIS IS A PUBLICATION OF THE

ERIE COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

The Erie County Office of Health Equity was established in December, 2021. The Office of Health Equity's vision is for all populations in Erie County to achieve maximum health and wellness. The Office of Health Equity is located within the Erie County Department of Health.

Want to learn more? Visit www.erie.gov/health-equity



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